

Best Management Practices

MISSOURI DEPARTMENT OF CONSERVATION



Bachman's Sparrow

Aimophila aestivalis

Common name • Bachman's Sparrow

Scientific name • *Aimophila aestivalis*

State status • Endangered

Ecology

Missouri is the northwesternmost portion of the Bachman's sparrows range. Birds migrate north to breed in Missouri between mid-March and late April. Females will lay as many as three clutches of eggs in one breeding season. Incubation is 12-14 days long, and young leave the nest after only 10 days, before they are able to fly. Bachman's sparrows forage on the ground for insects and for seeds of herbaceous plants and pines. They typically nest and forage in glades, open pinewoods, and overgrown grassy fields with scattered shrubs and trees.

Reasons for Decline

Historically, Bachman's sparrows occupied glades and open pinewoods in many areas in southern Missouri. Their population has diminished mainly because of the logging of pine forests in the early 1900s. Succession of savannas and glades to dense, woody areas because of fire suppression and invasion by cedars into glades have also drastically reduced available habitat.

Specific Recommendations

Bachman's sparrows prefer areas with thick undergrowth of grasses and sparse woody vegetation. Due to succession, this type of habitat is often ephemeral (temporary), so potential and existing areas should be protected and managed. A burn or thinning schedule should be developed to help maintain and create habitat.

→ Development projects should be avoided in core areas of open, mature pine forests; trees should be thinned occasionally to allow for growth of replacement trees.

→ Minimize impacts on pine savannas; conduct moderate to heavy thinning of middle-aged pine plantations.

→ Conduct controlled burns no less than every three years in areas of potential sparrow habitat, especially in areas where pine savanna restoration is possible and in glades, to rid areas of woody vegetation.

→ Avoid extensive ground disturbance activities, such as wind rowing and roller chopping.

Information Contacts

For further information regarding construction projects in glades, pine forests, and fields, contact:

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Missouri Department of Natural Resources
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U.S. Army Corps of Engineers
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U.S. Environmental Protection Agency
Water, Wetlands, and Pesticides Division
901 North 5th Street
Kansas City, KS 66101
Telephone: 913/551-7307

U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service
Ecological Services Field Office
608 E. Cherry Street, Room 200
Columbia, MO 65201
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